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 ACTION AF-01

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	C-01	OASY-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DS-00	EB-01	EUR-01
	FBO-01	HA-09	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-16
	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-06
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPR-01	PA-01	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01
	SCT-03	SNP-00	SP-00	SR-00	SS-00	STR-01	TRSE-00
	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	RPE-01		/058W

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O 221154Z FEB 94
 FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5785
 INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
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 USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KIGALI 00784

STATE FOR AF/C AND DSS/OP/AF
 BUJUMBURA FOR RSO
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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
 TAGS: PINS, ASEC, PHUM, PGOV, RW
 SUBJECT: MINISTER/POLITICIAN ASSASSINATED

1. (C) SUMMARY. UNIDENTIFIED GUNMEN SHOT AND KILLED OPPOSITION POLITICIAN AND MINISTER FELICIEN GATABAZI OUTSIDE HIS KIGALI HOME EVENING OF 2/21. THE INCIDENT COINCIDED WITH YET ANOTHER BREAKDOWN OF TALKS OVER FORMATION OF TRANSITION INSTITUTIONS, TARGETED FOR 2/22, AND FOLLOWS TWO DAYS OF SOMETIMES

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER
 DATE/CASE ID: 04 NOV 2011 201005065

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VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN KIGALI. NO ONE HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ASSASSINATION, BUT FINGERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY POINT AT BOTH THE PRESIDENT'S SIDE AND THE RPF. ANGRY PSD YOUTH COULD CAUSE INSECURITY TO ESCALATE BOTH IN KIGALI AND BUTARE, GATABAZI'S HOME. EMBASSY WARDEN NET WAS ACTIVATED FOR OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL AMERICANS DURING HOLIDAY WEEKEND TO KEEP AMCITS APPRISED OF THE SITUATION. THE EMERGENCY ACTION COMMITTEE MET MORNING 2/22 AND WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION AND INFORM THE COMMUNITY. ALL REGISTERED AMERICANS ARE ACCOUNTED FOR AND SAFE. END SUMMARY.

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GATABAZI ASSASSINATED

2. (U) FELICIEN GATABAZI, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND ENERGY AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT PARTY (PSD), WAS ASSASSINATED BY UNIDENTIFIED ARMED MEN OUTSIDE HIS HOME AT ABOUT 10PM MONDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 21. ONE OF HIS GENDARME

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BODY GUARDS WAS ALSO KILLED AND ANOTHER IS SERIOUSLY INJURED. FOLLOWING THE BURST OF AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE THAT KILLED THE MINISTER, A SERIES OF GRENADES EXPLODED IN THE VALLIES BETWEEN THE PRINCIPAL HILLS WHERE AMERICANS LIVE IN KIGALI.

3. (U) GATABAZI, THE HIGHEST RANKING POLITICAL LEADER TO BE ASSASSINATED SINCE MULTI-PARTY POLITICS BEGAN NEARLY THREE YEARS AGO, HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE PSD AND IN THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS, MOST RECENTLY IN HELPING TO BROKER PARTY DIFFERENCES AND REESTABLISH THE UNITY OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES. HIS KILLING FOLLOWS BY NINE MONTHS THE UNRESOLVED ASSASSINATION OF EMMANUEL GACYISI, AN LEADING POLITICIAN IN MDR, THE PARTY OF PM-DESIGNATE TWAGIRAMUNGU. AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDER WAY INTO THE KILLING, FOR WHICH NO ONE HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY.

4. (LOU) THE ASSASSINATION OCCURRED AS GATABAZI WAS RETURNING HOME FROM A MEETING AT WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE AND HIS SUPPORTERS SOUGHT TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES THAT WOULD HAVE ALLOWED INSTALLATION OF TRANSITION INSTITUTIONS AS ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 22 (SEE SEPTEL).

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TWO DAYS OF DISTURBANCES

5. (U) THE ASSASSINATION CAPPED TWO DAYS OF DISTURBANCES IN KIGALI THAT LEFT AT LEAST EIGHT PEOPLE DEAD. ON SUNDAY 2/20, DISTURBANCES AIMED AT PREVENTING PARTICIPATION IN A POLITICAL RALLY CALLED

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BY THE PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE'S FACTION OF THE MDR RESULTED IN DAMAGE TO CARS ON THE ROAD TO THE RALLY SITE. IN A NEARBY NEIGHBORHOOD, RESIDENTS ATTACKED AND KILLED SIX OUTSIDERS WHO, AFTER PILLAGING FOUR HOUSES, IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS OF THE MDR FACTION OPPOSING THE PM-DESIGNATE. RESIDENTS REPORT, HOWEVER, THAT THEY WERE CARRYING PARTY CARDS FOR THE PRESIDENT'S MRND AND THE HUTU-SUPREMICIST CDR. ANOTHER TWO PERSONS WERE REPORTEDLY KILLED WHEN THEIR BICYCLE COLLIDED WITH A CAR. GENDARMES AND UN FORCES (UNAMIR) PATROLLING IN VEHICLES AND HELICOPTERS KEPT THE VIOLENCE FROM ESCALATING OR SPREADING.

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O 221154Z FEB 94
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INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
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6. (U) ON MONDAY AFTERNOON, 2/21, THE CDR DEMONSTRATED OUTSIDE THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO PROTEST BEING DENIED THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE YET-TO-BE-FORMED TRANSITION ASSEMBLY. THEY CLAIM THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS PREVENTED THE CDR ACCESS TO THE CODE OF ETHICS WHICH PARTIES MUST SIGN BEFORE THEY CAN PARTICIPATE. THE DEMONSTRATION, WHICH BEGAN ABOUT 4 PM, WAS CONTAINED BY THE GENDARMES AND UNAMIR OBSERVERS. GENDARMES DISBURSED THE DEMONSTRATORS, NUMBERING ABOUT TWENTY, WITH TEARGAS ABOUT 11 PM, ALLOWING MINISTRY PERSONNEL, HELD VIRTUAL HOSTAGES IN THEIR OFFICES DURING THE DEMONSTRATION, TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.

MOTIVES MUDDLED

7. (U) RADIO FRANCE INTERNATIONAL (RFI) BROADCAST

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MORNING 2/22 INTERVIEWS WITH PSD PRESIDENT NZAMARAMBAHO AND A MEMBER OF GATABAZI'S FAMILY. NZAMARAMBAHO BLAMED PERSONS WHO WANT TO DERAIL THE ARUSHA PEACE PROCESS AND PREVENT THE TRANSITION INSTITUTIONS FROM BEING INSTALLED FOR GATABAZI'S DEATH. THE FAMILY MEMBER, POSSIBLY A HIGH-LEVEL GENDARME, SAID ONLY THAT AN INVESTIGATION WAS UNDERWAY.

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8. (U) HUTU EXTREMIST RADIO RTLM IS EXPLAINING THE GATABAZI ASSASSINATION AS THE WORK OF PM-DESIGNATE TWAGIRAMUNGU, WHO, AS AN ACOLYTE OF THE RPF, IS CARRYING OUT THE RPF POLICY OF ELIMINATING HUTU LEADERS. THEY CITE THE ASSASSINATION LAST MAY OF MDR LEADER GAPYISI AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS STRATEGY FOR WHICH RTLM BLAMES TWAGIRAMUNGU.

GATABAZI BIO DATA

9. (U) GATABAZI, AN ARTICULATE AND FORCEFUL POLITICAL LEADER, BEGAN HIS GOVERNMENT SERVICE AS MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS IN 1976, IN THE FIRST CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA. HE HELD THIS POSITION UNTIL 1982 WHEN HE WAS CONVICTED FOR DIVERTING FUNDS FROM REFUGEE ACTIVITIES AND SPENT ABOUT 8 MONTHS IN JAIL. WHEN THE COALITION GOVERNMENT TOOK OFFICE IN APRIL 1992, GATABAZI WAS NAMED AGAIN TO HEAD THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, A MINISTRY ATTRIBUTED TO THE PSD. GATABAZI IS WIDELY-BELIEVED TO HAVE ENRICHED HIMSELF DURING HIS MINISTERIAL TENURE, BOTH RECENTLY AND EARLIER. TRACTS AND SIGNED STATEMENTS HAVE CIRCULATED RECENTLY TO THIS EFFECT.

10. (C) WHEN HE RESUMED CONTROL OF THE PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY, GATABAZI CAME INTO DIRECT CONFLICT WITH THE PRESIDENT OVER A PLAN TO REORGANIZE THE MINISTRY IN A WAY THAT WOULD SIDELINE THE PRESIDENT'S SON-IN-LAW, DIRECTOR OF THE LUCRATIVE OFFICE OF BRIDGES AND ROADS. RUMORS SUGGESTED THAT THE SON-IN-LAW

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CONTROLLED A SLUSH-FUND USED TO FINANCE MRND AND CDR
ACTIVITIES, AND, SOME SAY, DEATH SQUAD ACTIVITIES.
THE REORGANIZATION PLAN, WHICH NEEDED PRESIDENTIAL
SIGNATURE, HAS NEVER BEEN APPROVED.

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PSD PLAYS KEY ROLE

11. (C) THE PSD IS THE ONE PARTY OPPOSED TO THE
PRESIDENT THAT HAS SURVIVED WITHOUT LEADERSHIP
DIVISIONS DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS. RUMORS THAT
SOME OF THE PARTY'S DESIGNATED ASSEMBLY DELEGATES HAD
GONE OVER TO THE PRESIDENT'S SIDE IN THE CURRENT
TUG-OF-WAR WERE COUNTERED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN
WHICH ALL ELEVEN REAFFIRMED THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE
PSD AND DENIED LOYALTY TO EITHER THE MRND OR THE

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RPF. GATABAZI AND THE PSD HAVE PLAYED KEY ROLES IN RECENT EFFORTS TO BROKER SOLUTIONS TO THE POLITICAL PARTY DIFFERENCES BLOCKING FORMATION OF TRANSITION INSTITUTIONS. THEY HAVE REMAINED SOLIDLY IN THE CAMP OF THE PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE AND THE RPF.

COMMENT

12. (C) THE MOTIVES FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF GATABAZI ARE FAR FROM CLEAR. HUTU EXTREMISTS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY TRY TO USE THE TRAGEDY TO STIR ANTI-TUTSI AND ANTI-RPF EMOTIONS, POSSIBLY TO PROVOKE AN RPF RESPONSE AND LAY THE BLAME ON THEM FOR PROLONGING THE POLITICAL IMPASSE. THE OPPOSITION WILL NO DOUBT BLAME THE PRESIDENT'S SUPPORTERS, EITHER THE PRESIDENTIAL GUARD, WHO GENERALLY HAVE ACCESS TO WEAPONS, OR THE PARTY YOUTH, THE INTERAHAMWE. WHETHER AN INVESTIGATION WILL TURN UP ANY SOLID EVIDENCE IS QUESTIONABLE.

13. (C) THE EMBASSY IS MONITORING THE SITUATION CLOSELY. WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE AT THIS TIME THAT IT WILL GET OUT OF HAND. UNAMIR HAS PLAYED A POSITIVE AND HELPFUL ROLE IN CONTAINING AND PREVENTING ESCALATION OF THE VIOLENCE WITH RAPID RESPONSES AND A

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CONTINUOUS PRESENCE AT TROUBLE SPOTS DURING THE PAST
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THREE DAYS. WE CAN, HOWEVER, ANTICIPATE CLASHES
BETWEEN THE PSD PARTY YOUTH AND YOUTH OF THE MRND/CDR
PARTIES BOTH IN KIGALI AND BUTARE, THE HOME OF
GATABAZI WHERE THE FUNERAL WILL TAKE PLACE ON
THURSDAY 2/24. MEANWHILE, KENYA AIRWAYS HAS
CANCELLED ITS FLIGHT TO KIGALI AFTERNOON OF 2/22,
STRANDING SOME AMERICAN VISITORS IN KIGALI AND SOME
OFFICIAL AMERICAN SPOUSES IN NAIROBI.

14. (C) THE EMBASSY KEPT THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY,
BOTH OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL, INFORMED ABOUT THE
SECURITY SITUATION 2/20-21 VIA THE WARDEN NETS. THE
EMERGENCY ACTION COMMITTEE MET MORNING OF 2/22 TO
REVIEW THE SITUATION AND WILL CONSULT AFTERNOON OF
2/22 TO DETERMINE WHAT FURTHER ADVICE TO PROVIDE THE
COMMUNITY. ALL AMERICANS ARE CURRENTLY SAFE AND
ACCOUNTED FOR.

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